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Detailed Description Text - DETX (3):

Body 12 is best described by referring to FIG. 2. As seen from that figure, body 12 is made from three layers of extruded plastic which adhere to each other. The body has an inner layer 24, an outer layer 26 and a middle layer 28. Layers 24, 26 and 28 are all made from a polymers. The inner and outer layers are preferably made from what is sometimes referred to by those skilled in the art as a semi-rigid polymer. Examples of these include: polyamides, polyamide elastomers, copolymers based on polyamides such as Pebax 7033 (available from Atochem, Paris, France and Philadelphia, Pa.), high-density polyethylene, rigid polyurethane, and polypropylene. Inner layer 24 may further include a lubricity enhancing agent mixed with the polymer. Such lubricity enhancing agents are well known in the art including: mineral fillers such as bismuth oxychloride, mica, graphite and silicone or hydrogel materials such as polyvinylpyrrolidone. The middle layer is made from a polymer which is more flexible and has a lower melt temperature than the inner and outer layers. Examples of suitable materials for middle layer 28 include: low-durometer polyurethane, low density polyethylene, maleated polyolefins such as Plexar.RTM. (available from Quantum Chemical, Cincinnati, Ohio), nylon elastomers, Pebax 2533.RTM. (available from Atochem), copolymers of nylon-11 and other polyamides.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (4):

Catheter 10 further includes an integral fuseless distal tip 30. Distal tip 30 is made from a distal portion of middle layer 28 which extends distally of body 12. Distal tip 30 may also include either a portion of inner layer 24 or outer layer 26 which extends distally of body 12. However, most preferably, distal tip 30 is made only from middle layer 28. Because the distal tip is made from the middle layer and no more than one of the inner and outer layers, it is softer than portions of the body 12 proximal thereto. Distal tip 30 can be tapered inwardly towards said lumen for easy insertion into a vessel, such as when applying the invention to a catheter sheath introducer.